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ABSTRACT

Organizational linkages between teacher education courses and various health care industries used to promote the professional growth and development of 14 University of Louisville (Kentucky) students are described. Students who took part in the program defined their own educational needs, wrote performance objectives to address these needs, selected appropriate out-of-university projects, and contracted with a supervising staff member for a specific grade in the course, based on the quality and number of projects undertaken. The contingencies involved in the completion of the project required internship periods at health care agencies. A post-internship conference provided means of assessment for the students who participated. Positive contingency contracting resulted in the successful achievement of performance objectives. (LH)

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LINKING TEACHER EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE THROUGH CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING

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LINKING TEACHER EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE THROUGH

CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING

Contingency contracting is "the making of an agreement with someone in which an outcome is made dependent upon performance (Homme, 1970, p. IX). It is based upon the systematic application of some generally accepted principles of motivation and human behavior: (1) learners learn more willingly and satisfactorily if the framework within which learning takes place has been mutually agreed upon by the teacher and the learner; (2) motivation can be induced; (3) "the consequences of an act performed under motivation are called the contingencies of the act" (Homme, 1970, p. 6); and (4) under conditions where the consequences of the performance of a learner with induced motivation result in achieving something desirable, positive contigency contracting has been attained.

Contingency contracting is utilized in the teacher education program at the University of Louisville. The 132 credit hour program leading to the Bachelor of Science Degree in Health Occupations Education has general education, professional education and specialization components. As a teacher education program in Kentucky, it meets the curriculum standards as specified in the Kentucky Teacher Preparation and Certification Handbook. This program is designed to serve credentialed practitioners in health occupations who desire to obtain the Provisional High School Certificate with an area of Specialization in Health Occupations education and teachers who seek initial or continuing certification as they meet the requirements

for the degree. The requirement of 48 semester credits in the Specialization component may be met through the awarding of credit based on (1) vocational subjects, (2) vocational experience, and (3) supervised occupational experience.

Contingency contracting is used in the specialization component of the program through the course Supervised Occupational Experience. The purpose is to provide linkage between teacher education courses and the supervisors in health care industries in order to promote professional growth and development of students.

Students who choose to complete Supervised Occupational Experience for credit enter into a contract with the university teacher educator and a supervisor of an employing agency in order to meet educational needs as perceived by the student. In this context, an educational need is defined as the difference between present and desired levels of competency. The teacher educator establishes a helping relationship to assist each student to: (1) determine weaknesses (from which educational needs are determined); (2) write performance objectives based on the educational needs; (3) divide the performance objectives into accomplishments for three five-week management periods during each semester; (4) identify and solicit assistance of a supervisor in the employing agency; and (5) contract for a grade for the course. The grades are recorded upon satisfactory completion of the following four contingencies: (1) performance objectives; (2) a determined number of projects selected from a list and specified in the contract; (3) three assessments by the supervisor in the employing agency; and (4) the post-internship assessment. These contingencies, the criteria for judging the project papers, and the format for the post-internship assessment are explained at the beginning of the course during a conference

between the student, the supervisor and the University teacher educator.

This paper describes the management of four defined contingencies for fourteen teacher education students who took the course Supervised Occupational Experience. All of them were working in health care agencies which is a requirement.

The Contingency of completion of Performance Objectives. Some of the students had no background in writing performance objectives. The teacher educator provided the information on how to do this. Data on the completion of performance objectives are presented in Table I.

These fourteen students included one certified dental assistant, two certified dental hygientists (both were certified for expanded functions), eight were certified radiology technologists, and three were registered nurses. These students achieved a total of thirty-five (35) performance objectives; twenty-two (22) related to the cognitive domain of knowledge and thirteen (13) to psychomotor (ten related to process and three to products). The dental assistant completed three objectives and the registered nurses eight objectives, in the cognitive domain and four in the psychomotor (process). The radiology technologists completed eight performance objectives in the cognitive domain, six in psychomotor (process) and three in the psychomotor (product). None of the objective were related to the affective domain of knowledge.

TABLE I
THE CONTINGENCY OF COMPLETION OF
PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

DOMAINS OF KNOWLEDGE	AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION				
	Dental Assisting	Dental Hygiene	Nursing (R.N.)	Radiology Technology	TOTAL
Cognitive	3	3	8	8	22
Psychomotor					
Process (skill/time)		4		6	10
Product				3	3
TOTAL	3	7	8	17	35

The Contingency of Completion of Projects. All but one of these fourteen students contracted for a grade of A for the course and completed twenty-six (26) projects. Five students elected to describe a theory of learning and its utilization in 5 patient education situations (Project # 1); seven students developed lesson plans and presented the lesson (Project # 2); seven drafted a position statement on the personal advantages derived from being active members of their professional organizations (Project # 3); three students described how three human development concepts were applicable to patient care (Project # 4); and four drafted position statements regarding continuing education as a requirement for annual license, registration or certification (Project #5). No student selected Project # 6. This information is shown in Table 2.

The following criteria and decision rules were used by the teacher educator in judging the projects.

Points	Criteria	Decision Rule
(10)	1. Is the content of the paper congruent with the selected objectives?	Acceptable = 40-50 Unacceptable = below 35
	2. Ability of writer to communicate thought.	
	3. Does paper follow established format:	
(5)	(Title Page)	
(25)	Organization of paper: Introduction (5); body (10); summary (5); and bibliography (2.5)	
	4. Does the paper meet schedule specifications: (2.5)	

The Contingency of Completion of Assessments by Supervisors. After each of the three management periods of five weeks, the supervisors in the Health Care Industries, using provided assessment forms, evaluated the students on (1) the progress and/or acheivement of the performance objectives, and (2) Interview data. The following criteria were provided on a check list

TABLE II
THE CONTINGENCY OF COMPLETION OF PROJECTS AND AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

PROJECT LIST	AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION				
	Dental Assistant	Dental Hygienist	Nurse (Registered)	Radiology Technologist	TOTAL
1. Research 1 theory of learning and describe its utilization in 5 patient education situations.	1	2	1	1	5
2. Develop a lesson plan on the use of personal protective equipment in your specialty area; present the lesson to a group as an in-service workshop or as a guest lecturer in a classroom setting.	0	1	1	5	7
3. Draft a position statement of the personal advantages derived from being an active member of your professional organization.	1	1	0	5	7
4. Describe at least three of the human development concepts and how they are applicable in patient care.	0	0	2	1	3
5. Draft a position statement regarding continuing education (proof of professional development) as a requirement for annual license, registration or certification renewal. The statement should be written as you would want it presented to the state legislature.	0	0	2	2	4
6. Develop a system for identifying educational workshops, seminars, meetings (local, state, national) and professional literature for increasing knowledge and skill in your specialty; detail the system and catalogue the results of your study.	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	4	6	14	26

and were adapted from the ICARE Instrument (Deever & Smith): (a) Ethics of Health Care Field; (b) Development of Human Skills; (c) Staff Relations; (d) Occupational Self-Evaluation; (e) Improvement of Occupational competence; (f) Growth in Health Care Specialty; and (g) Health Care Delivery System Information.

The supervisor discussed the evaluation with each student and a mutual agreement was reached about actions needed to accomplish the objectives. Students kept weekly logs of activities which related to the performance objectives and at the end of each five week management period, wrote a self-assessment in relation to achievement (or barriers to the achievement) of the performance objective.

Each supervisor held professional credentials in the student's area of specialization. The following supervisors assisted the fourteen students for which data are presented: (1) three were dentists for the dental assistant and the two dental hygienists; two Radiologists (M.D.'s) for two of the raidology technologists and six chief Radiology Technologists for the six; and (3) the three registered nurses had an O.R. Supervisor, an Assistant Driectress of Nursing, and a Directress of Nursing (all were registered nurses).

The Contingency of Completion of a Post-Internship Assessment. At the end of the semester, students wrote post-internship assessment papers according to a predetermined and distributed format. The papers addressed (1) each performance objective, and (2) the selected projects. For each objective, the students, according to directions in the course outline, related:

> How the objective was of benefit to you in your present position and/or occupational specialty; to include any "enlightenment" you may have experienced in reaching the objective, and any difficulties you may have encountered and how you were able to overcome them.

For each project, the students wrote summaries expressing the benefits they gained in professional growth and development from engaging in each

project. Using the criteria distributed at the beginning of the course, the teacher educator evaluated the students' projects. All of the projects for these fourteen students were judged to be acceptable.

During the post internship conference the teacher educator discussed with the students their assessments of achievements in relation to the objectives and projects. The students indicated that their perceived educational needs had been met and all of them wrote about and verbally described their feelings of accomplishment. The supervisors in the health care industries indicated that they experienced feelings of satisfaction in assisting the students in their growth and development. Additionally, many of the projects completed by the stucents resulted in improvement in the process of health care or usable products for the health care agencies.

Summary. The teacher education program in health occupations education at the University of Louisville has general education, professional education and specialization components. This paper has described how linkages between teacher education and the health care industries were used in order to promote professional growth and development of students. Fourteen students who took for credit the course Supervised Occupational experiences, (1) defined their educational needs, (2) wrote performance objectives to address these needs, (3) selected projects, and (4) contracted for a grade for the course. Under induced motivation of these students, four contingencies were managed under an agreement arrangement between the teacher educator and the supervisors in the health care industries. Positive contingency contracting resulted in the achievement of desirable performance in relation to the objectives and in the projects indicating that professional growth and development had occurred.

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